

Dear FCC,

As a hearing consumer of VRS services and an individual that works within the deaf community, I strongly urge you to not enforce a "speed of answering" requirement on VRS services. A tendency of culturally Deaf individuals is to explain things completely, go into greater depth of background information regarding the situation, and cherish the opportunity to communicate effectively with their hearing and non-hearing friends, co-workers, and/or people in their community. This cultural tendency leads to longer call times and requires more interpreters be readily available. Sadly, the need for skilled interpreters is great and continues to grow exponentially in the deaf services field. If a "speed of answering" requirement were established, it would force VRS providers to either reduce the quality of interpreters that they provide or reduce the number of hours VRS services would be available to VRS consumers. Neither of these options should be considered as either one would have a negative impact on VRS services and the deaf community. Likewise, hiring an unskilled interpreter to interpret a VRS call would be like hiring a person who could not type to act as a TTY or TDD operator. As a consumer of VRS services, I greatly appreciate the options to choose a VRS provider and the option to sign in person to a deaf consumer in lieu of utilizing a TTY or TDD operator. Please continue to provide this valuable service without a "speed of answering" requirement. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,
Eric Breland, BEI III